

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5676

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TU, UN

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS--TURKEY--CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY

REF: (A) STATE 170003 (B) GENEVA 5494

1. EXPERIENCED AND KNOWLEDGEABLE OBSERVERS FROM THIS MISSION HAVE MADE REPEATED AND FREQUENT VISITS TO THE POPPY GROWING AREA PRIOR TO AND DURING THE GROWING SEASON. THEIR OBSERVATIONS HAVE BEEN SUPPLEMENTED BY THOSE OF A UNITED NATIONS TEAM (GENEVA 5494). THE FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT OF TURKISH CONTROLS IS BASED ON THOSE FIRST-HAND OBSERVATIONS IN THE FIELD.

2. THE BEST MEASURE OF SUCCESS IN THE CONTROL PROGRAM SO FAR IS THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO RPT NO EVIDENCE OF INCISION OF THE POPPY CAPSULES. BOTH U.S. AND U.N. OBSERVERS HAVE SO REPORTED. A FURTHER MEANINGFUL INDICATION OF SUCCESS IS THAT MAJOR NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS APPEAR TO BE MAKING NO RPT NO EFFORT TO PERSUADE FARMERS TO DIVERT PART OF THEIR CROP INTO ILLICIT CHANNELS.

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3. PROBABLY THE STRONGEST FACTORS IN MAKING THE CONTROL PROGRAM

EFFECTIVE HAVE BEEN THE STRONG CONTROL EFFORTS OF THE SOIL PRODUCTS OFFICE (TMO) AND FARMER COMPLIANCE, WHICH THE GOT HAS ENCOURAGED BY LIBERAL PRICE FOR POPPY STRAW AND BY BUYING THE ENTIRE CROP.

4. TMO HAS BEEN EFFECTIVE IN LICENSING FARMERS AND IN INSPECTING AND MEASURING CULTIVATED FIELDS. VAST MAJORITY, IF NOT ALL, POPPY FIELDS HAVE BEEN INSPECTED AND MEASURED ONCE OR MORE BY TMO. EXCESSIVE CULTIVATION BEYOND LICENSED LIMITS, WHETHER WILLFUL OR INADVERTANT, HAS BEEN DESTROYED BY JANDARMA OR BY THE FARMERS THEMSELVES UNDER JANDARMA SUPERVISION. JANDARMA HAS IN ADDITION MADE SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF ARRESTS OF FARMERS SUSPECTED OF EXCESSIVE OR UNLICENSED GROWING.

5. THE SAME TMO TEAMS HAVE MORE RECENTLY BEEN INSPECTING THE VAST MAJORITY OF FIELDS FOR EVIDENCE OF INCISION PRIOR TO GIVING PERMISSION TO HARVEST. AT SAME TIME TMO TEAMS ARE GIVING FARMERS INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO HARVEST CAPSULES AND HOW TO REMOVE POPPY SEED WITH ONLY MINOR DAMAGE TO CAPSULES. MISSION OFFICERS HAVE OBSERVED THAT THESE INSTRUCTIONS ALREADY WELL KNOWN BY FARMERS.

6. HIGH LEVEL OF FARMER KNOWLEDGE OF ALL ELEMENTS GOT CONTROL PROGRAM HAS SURPRISED MISSION OFFICERS VISITING POPPY GROWING AREA. WELL IN ADVANCE, FARMERS HAVE HEARD BY RADIO, FROM TMO INSPECTION TEAMS, OR THROUGH VILLAGE LEADERS OF GOT DIRECTIVES REGARDING LICENSING, PLANTING, HARVESTING, AND SALE OF POPPY CROP.

7. MISSION OFFICERS AND FLS'S IN CONVERSATION WITH OPPI FARMERS HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT GOT RATES FOR POPPY STRAW ARE GENERALLY ACCEPTED AS LIBERAL AND JUST. SOME FARMERS HAVE NOTED THAT THEY DID NOT RPT NOT LIKE TO INCISE THE POPPY CAPSULE TO COLLECT OPIUM GUM AS THAT WAS A TEDIOUS PROCESS. OTHERS HAVE CHARACTERIZED THE PRESENT CONTROL SYSTEM AS SO STRICT AS TO DISCOURAGE THEM FROM POPPY CULTIVATION.

8. TURKISH POPPY FARMERS DO NOT RPT NOT SEEM PRE-DISPOSED TO ILLEGAL TRAFFICKING. TRAFFICKING IN PAST CAN BE ATTRIBUTED IN PART TO FAILURE OF GOT TO PURCHASE ALL RAW OPIUM PRODUCED BY FARMERS.
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DIVERSION TO ILLEGAL CHANNELS OCCURRED WHEN ILLICIT BUYERS COULD TAKE OFF FARMERS' HANDS STOCKS WHICH GOT WOULD NOT. UNDER PRESENT SYSTEM TMO IS BUYING ENTIRE CROP, INCLUDING PRODUCTION BEYOND YIELD ESTIMATES MADE DURING PRIOR TMO FIELD INSPECTIONS.

9. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT POST-1972 BAN ON POPPY CULTIVATION AND PRESENT PROHIBITION OF INCISION HAVE BEEN MADE EFFECTIVE AT A TIME WHEN, ACCORDING TO THE DEA, THE WHOLESALE PRICE FOR

TURKISH OPIUM HAS RISEN TEN-FOLD. DEA FURTHER REPORTS THAT THE DEMAND FOR HEROIN AND MORPHINE BASE IN WESTERN EUROPE HAS RISEN AND IS BEING MET WITH OPIATES OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN ORIGIN. THE EGYPTIAN ADDICT MARKET IS IN THE MIDST OF A SEVERE SHORTAGE OF OPIUM EVEN WITH RAW OPIUM PRICES HIGHER THAN THOSE IN WESTERN EUROPE. YET, DESPITE THE NEARNESS OF THESE TWO MARKETS THE COMPLIANCE OF THE TURKISH FARMER WITH GOT CONTROLS SEEMS GOOD. IT SHOULD FURTHER BE NOTED THAT RECENT DEA FIGURES SHOW 78 RPT 78 PERCENT OF HEROIN SEIZED NOW IN U.S. IS OF MEXICAN ORIGIN WITH REMAINDER BEING OF VARIOUS ORIGINS, INCLUDING SOUTHEAST ASIAN AND TRKISH. DEA REPORTS THAT FOLLOWING SIZEABLE SEIZURES OF MORPHINE BASE AND OPIUM IN TURKEY IN 1972 AND 1973, SEIZURES OF BOTH MORPHINE BASE AND OPIUM HAVE SO DROPPED DURING PAST TWO YEARS AS TO BECOME PRACTICALLY NEGLIGIBLE.

10. COMMENT: WE ARE PLEASED TO FORWARD THIS ENCOURGING REPORT. AT THE SAME TIME WE MUST SOUND A NOTE OF CAUTION THAT ALL THE RETURNS ARE NOT YET IN. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS GRATIFYING THAT EVIDENCE AVAILABLE SO FAR SEEMS TO POINT TOWARD A SIGNIFICANT MEASURE OF SUCCESS FOR GOT EFFORTS TO PROHIBIT OPIUM PRODUCTION AND DIVERSION INTO ILLEGAL CHANNELS. MACOMBER

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